

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

OMB-01 IO-13 SAM-01 SAB-01 EB-07 /087 W

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R 031258Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY SANA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8444

INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

USLIASON OFFICE

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANA 2286

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, YE, CH, PK, KN, KS

SUBJECT: HAMDI'S FORTHCOMING TRAVEL PLANS MAY

INCLUDE NORTH KOREA

1. IT HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED THAT COMMAND COUNCIL CHAIRMAN IBRAHIM AL-HAMDI WILL UNDERTAKE SEVERAL OFFICIAL ASIAN VISITS THIS AUGUST. ASIDE FROM ATTENDING THE NON-ALIGNED HEADS OF STATE SUMMIT AT COLOMBO, CEYLON, HAMDI PLANS OFFICIAL VISITS TO PAKISTAN AND THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA. MOREOVER, MINSTATE AHMED ABDU SA'ID HAS ALSO REPORTED TO AMBASSADOR THAT PRESIDENT HAMDI MAY VISIT NORTH KOREA.
2. WITH REGARD TO HAMDI'S PLANNED TRIP TO PYONGYANG, SA'ID VOICED REGRET THAT SOUTH KOREA HAS FAILED TO PRESS FORWARD WITH PLANS TO ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH YAR OR TO FOLLOW THROUGH WITH OFFER OF LIMITED ECONOMIC OR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. SA'ID INDICATED YARG NOT INTERESTED IN SOUTH KOREAN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE PER SE BUT HOPEFUL THAT ROK -- OR SOUTH KOREAN COMPANIES -- COULD AT LEAST BE ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE IN JOINT VENTURE OPERATIONS WHICH WOULD BE PROFITABLE TO BOTH YEMEN AND SOUTH KOREA. ONE SPECIFIC PROJECT HE MENTIONED WAS PROPOSED "DRY PROCESS" CEMENT PLANT WHICH WOULD BE CONSTRUCTED

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AT AMRAN NORTH OF SANA.

3. COMMENT. NORTH KOREA CURRENTLY HAS INITIATIVE IN YEMENI-KOREAN RELATIONS (DPRK DELEGATION VISITED EARLIER THIS YEAR), AND HAMDI'S FORTHCOMING VISIT TO FAR EAST OFFERS ROK CHANCE TO MAKE FIRM AND POSITIVE IMPRESSION ON YAR LEADER. THUS, EMBASSY BELIEVES ROK MIGHT PROFITABLY CONSIDER EXTENDING OFFICIAL INVITATION TO HAMDI TO VISIT SEOUL, DESPITE HIS POSSIBLE TRIP TO PYONGYANG. IF SUCH A VISIT COULD BE ARRANGED, HAMDI WOULD HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO SEE FIRST-HAND ONE OF MOST DYNAMIC WESTERN-ORIENTED SOCIETIES IN ASIA. IF ANNOUNCEMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS AND OF SOME KIND OF SOUTH KOREAN PARTICIPATION IN A YAR INDUSTRIAL INVESTMENT PROJECT COULD BE TIMED TO COINCIDE WITH VISIT, SOUTH KOREA WOULD BE ABLE FOR FIRST TIME TO MAKE INROADS INTO NORTH KOREA'S POSITION HERE. DESPITE FACT LATTER RELATIONSHIP CONTINGENT ON YAR'S LONG-STANDING STRONG TIES WITH PRC, SOUTH KOREA COULD AT LEAST NORMALIZE ITS SANA TIES WITH SOME POSITIVE EFFECT ON ANY FUTURE UN VOTE ON THE KOREAN QUESTION. IN ANY CASE, WITH ANOTHER VOTE IN THE OFFING, ROK SHOULD START TO DO SOMETHING HERE. LAST MINUTE EFFORTS LAST YEAR DIDN'T WORK, AND COULD

BACKFIRE AGAIN THIS YEAR. SCOTES

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